National Child Care Information Center
A service of the Child Care Bureau

NCCIC

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STATES WITH DISTANCE LEARNING OPTIONS

Comprehensive professional development systems for early care and education personnel are accessible and based on a clearly articulated framework; include a continuum of training and ongoing supports; define pathways that are tied to licensure, leading to qualifications and credentials; and address the needs of individual, adult learners. Enhancing a spirit of life-long learning is one goal of any professional development system; similar to this goal, a professional development system itself is never a finished product and should continually evolve and be refined to best meet the needs of the population it serves.

Within professional development systems there are several interconnected components. These components fall under five broad elements: 1) Funding; 2) Core Knowledge; 3) Qualifications and Credentials; 4) Quality Assurances; and 5) Access and Outreach. A one-page document that outlines and defines this simplified framework is available on the Web at http://nccic.org/pubs/goodstart/pdsystem.html or in PDF format at http://nccic.org/pubs/goodstart/pdsystem.pdf.

Distance learning is a component of the Access and Outreach element of a professional development system. States are expanding training delivery systems for child care providers in order to make additional training and education more accessible. States also are accepting a greater variety of training—including distance-education courses (such as correspondence courses, videoconferencing, Web-based correspondence, etc.)—as a way for providers to satisfy licensing and/or additional education requirements. The following State examples provide information on early childhood professional development systems available on the Web that have a distance- learning component.

STATES

Alaska

■ **Child Care Connection Resource and Referral Agency**
World Wide Web: http://www.childcareconnection.org
Alaska Child Care Connection's Resource Development Program helps child care providers with appropriate training to provide better early care and education experiences for children and families. Training opportunities include early childhood and school-age workshops, mini-courses and seminars on a variety of topics including heath and safety, child development basics, Child Development Associate (CDA) credential training, family child care, training of trainers, technical assistance and child care administration. Recognizing that providers in rural areas have fewer training opportunities, Child Care Connection does have several distance delivery training options and is in the process of developing additional training modules. Additional information on professional development and training is available on the Web at http://www.childcareconnection.org/ps/ps_ccc_trainings.htm.

■ **University of Alaska**
World Wide Web: http://ece-distance.alaska.edu/index.html

The University of Alaska offers a distance-delivered associate's of applied science degree in early childhood education. The program reaches students all over the State in over 25 tiny villages, many small towns and several cities via audio-conference, e-mail, faxing and computer conferencing. The Web site includes information about course schedules and instructors.

California

■ **Child Development Training Institute**
World Wide Web: http://www.childdevelopment.org/schoverview.htm

The Web site of the Child Development Training Institute maintains a schedule of Non-traditional Classes and Trainings in early childhood education, including online classes. A search engine is available for prospective students to search for online courses in their local area that are offered for credit or professional development hours.

Colorado

■ **Colorado Community Colleges Online**
World Wide Web: http://www.ccconline.org/

The Early Childhood Professions Program is designed to prepare people to work with young children in a variety of settings. The Group Leader and Director Certifications are designed to meet the educational requirements established by the Colorado Department of Human Services. People who wish to work in licensed early childhood care and education programs may complete the certification sequence of courses for Group Leaders or Directors and may also go on to earn a two-year degree at many of the State's community colleges. All courses needed for Group Leader or Director certificates are available online and are accepted at most of the State's community colleges. Additional information is available on the Web at http://www.ccconline.org/courses/homepage_ece.htm.

Indiana

■ The Indiana Family and Social Services Administration and its partners continue to seek opportunities to deliver high-quality instruction and certification to child care providers throughout Indiana. An Online Child Development Associate (CDA) credential is available to meet the needs of providers in areas of the State with little or no access to traditional education. Students can take these classes when it is convenient and when they have access to a computer. Additional information is available on the Web at http://www.in.gov/fssa/childcarelearning/.

Kentucky

■ **Kentucky's STEPS Training and Outreach Project**
World Wide Web: http://www.ihdi.uky.edu/stepsweb

STEPS (Sequenced Transition to Education in the Public Schools) provides training and consultative services in the following areas:
- Developing community wide transition systems;
- Team building;

- Effective meeting strategies;
- Interagency and collaborative issues;
- Assessing and facilitating social and behavioral skills for transition;
- Leadership;
- Effective training skills; and
- Conflict resolution.

Assessing Social, Behavioral and Functional Skills for Preschool Populations is a current Web-based training that is being offered on their Web site. Additional information is available on the Web at http://www.ihdi.uky.edu/stepsweb/hels/.

Minnesota

■ **Eager-to-Learn**
380 Lafayette Road, #103
St. Paul, MN 55107
651-290-9704
World Wide Web: www.mnchildcare.org

Eager-to-Learn, a program of the Minnesota Child Care Resource & Referral Network, is designed to provide high-quality, affordable educational opportunities using electronic or e-learning technologies and experienced, knowledgeable instructors. The program also features information and education about e-learning, links to other e-learning sites and a virtual meeting site for professional early childhood and school-age groups. The goal of this collaborative program is to provide a viable alternative for delivering rich learning experiences in a setting that reduces geographic, economic, and other barriers of traditional professional development. Courses can be completed for in-service hours and Continuing Education Units (CEU) (a credit option is available for some courses).

Nebraska

■ **Nebraska's Early Childhood Training Center (ECTC)**
World Wide Web: http://www.esu3.org/ectc/

ECTC provides support and training to staff working with young Nebraska children and their families, and serves as a resource to parents and families about parenting. The section of the ECTC Web Site, "Training and Consultation," provides information on training topics; consultation services; an information "Child Line"; registry; Nebraska training partners; regional training coalitions; and Statewide staff development. ECTC supports a broad array of training initiatives through direct participation and media services.

The University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension is a Nebraska Training Partner; they offer an independent study course for early childhood professionals via the internet. Information on Nebraska's Training Partners is available on the Web at http://www.esu3.org/ectc/train/Regional.html. Information on the University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension program is available on the Web at http://nerec.unl.edu/childcare.htm.

New York

■   **New York State Early Childhood Education Online**
       World Wide Web: http://www.nyseceonline.suny.edu/default.htm
Several colleges in the State University of New York (SUNY) system offer early childhood education courses online. All courses are credit-bearing and taught by the college faculty. This Web site includes a listing of all courses by campus, course descriptions and a sample online course. Also, on the Web site is *A Guide to Distance Learning: For Early Childhood Students in the SUNY System* available at http://www.nyseceonline.suny.edu/gdl01.html.

North Carolina

■   **North Carolina Institute for Early Childhood Professional Development**
       World Wide Web: http://www.ncchildcare.org
This Web site provides support and information for those who are interested in professional development opportunities. The section "Education Opportunities" lists various college credit course work and credit paths available, including certification or degree via distance learning.

■   **Frank Porter Graham (FPG) Child Development Institute**
       The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
       Campus Box 8180
       Chapel Hill, NC 27599-8180
       919-962-5777
       World Wide Web: http://www.fpg.unc.edu/
FPG is expanding early childhood distance learning. Project CONTACT (College Opportunity Networks & Technology Access for Child Care Teachers) is a research and training project designed to develop a model system of delivery and support for early childhood college courses offered on the Internet. This distance learning effort will afford child care teachers with an opportunity to earn college credits from work, home, a college campus or a community base. CONTACT also seeks to build the capacity of the community college system to offer early childhood education to their students at a distance. Additional information, along with distance-learning tools and distance learning projects, are available on the Web at http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~contact/index.cfm.

Project CONTACT is partnered with the North Carolina Community College System (NCCCS). Their Early Childhood Studies Web site is available at http://www.ncccs.cc.nc.us/Perkins/Early_Childhood_Studies/early_childhood_studies.htm. In addition, information on distance learning through NCCCS is available on the Web at http://www.ncccs.cc.nc.us/Distance_Learning/index.html. This site offers links to the individual community colleges and the courses they offer.

Oklahoma

■   **Entry Level Child Care Training (ELCCT) Online**
       World Wide Web: http://www.cecpd.org/Child%20Care%20Careers/elcctonline.htm
ELCCT Online, part of the Center for Early Childhood Professional Development (CECPD), College of Continuing Education, University of Oklahoma, meets the child care center licensing

requirement for the entry-level training for the first 90 days of employment. Additional information on CECPD is available on the Web at http://www.cecpd.org/.

Wisconsin

■   **Wisconsin Training Network**
         World Wide Web: http://www.wisconsintrainingnetwork.info/default.htm
The Training Network and Event Calendar provides information on conferences and local training events; registries on professional administrators credentials and professional infant toddler credentials; State and county required entry level courses; and credit courses. Each section provides a database searchable by training topic, location of training, and in some cases dates of training. Some courses are listed as being available online. To find specific online courses, type "online" in the search engine and the Network will display all online courses available through the network.

This resource is available from The Registry, Wisconsin's Recognition System for the Childhood Care and Education Profession, acknowledges and highlights the training, experience and professionalism that is vital to quality child care. The Registry awards a certificate verifying that individuals have met all State of Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services entry level and continuing education requirements. Training above and beyond those requirements along with experience and professional contributions are represented by the levels and stars of The Registry's career ladder. Additional information on The Registry, a collaboration of Wisconsin Early Childhood Association, Wisconsin Family Child Care Association, Wisconsin Child Care Administrators Association, Wisconsin School-Age Alliance, and Wisconsin Head Start Association, is available on the Web at http://www.the-registry.org/registry.htm.

Wyoming

■   The Wyoming Early Childhood Training Opportunities Web site is sponsored by Child Care Finder, a program of Children and Nutrition Services. This site provides training opportunities via region, and has links to approved distance delivery courses through Casper College and the University of Wyoming. This resource is available on the Web at http://www.childrens-nutrition.com/index_files/page0005.htm.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCE

■   The following information is excerpted from the *Child Care and Development Fund Report of State Plans FY 2004-2005* (draft), prepared by the National Child Care Information Center (NCCIC) for the Child Care Bureau, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services:

> **Section 5.2 – State Plans for Professional Development**
>
> *Describe the provider training, technical assistance, and professional development opportunities that are available to child care providers. Are these opportunities available Statewide to all types of providers? If not, please describe.*

California

The trainings on the Prekindergarten Learning and Development Guidelines were initially presented through a series of facilitated distance learning sessions at 210 downlink sites in the state.

Illinois

HeadsUp! Reading: This training uses distance learning to bring teachers and parents the latest research on how children learn to read and write. The course delivers 30 hours of college-level training to early childhood professionals at their own doorsteps—child care centers, child care resource and referral agencies, Head Start sites, Pre-K classrooms and community colleges.

Indiana

Child Care Learning - On-line Learning - The Family and Social Services Administration and its partners came together to offer an opportunity to early care and education providers to receive the education components of the Child Development Associate (CDA) credential for college credit. The students can take the classes when it is convenient and when they have access to a computer. Child Care Learning provides an opportunity for early childhood professionals to serve as Mentors to students enrolled in on-line coursework.

Iowa

[Iowa Child Care and Early Education Network] trainings for community professionals that support providers –As a follow-up to The Midwest Child Care Research Consortium (Child Care in the Heartland) Iowa State University and the Lead Agency have partnered in offering a series of trainings around quality in early care and education. The focus of the trainings, targeted to community partners who support or regulate child care providers, has been to enhance the technical assistance skills in quality areas—as identified in the ECERS and reported in the research as needing improvement. This training is being provided through Iowa's interactive telecommunications network system which has both video and audio communication.

Maine

Maine has a Child Care and Early Education Career Development System (Maine Roads to Quality) in place. A 180-hour core-knowledge training program has been developed. This training is offered statewide to all types of providers through the Child Care Resource Development Centers. In the fall of 2003 one of the training programs will be made available on the web to meet the needs of rural family child care providers.

Massachusetts

A Caring Curriculum for Infants and Toddlers is a distance learning course developed by the Office of Child Care Services (OCCS) to assist child care programs in understanding infant/toddler development and appropriate infant/toddler curricula.

Building Relationships in the School Age Environment is a distance learning course developed by OCCS that is separated into five individual distance learning modules. The modules include information relevant to school-age programming such as middle

childhood development, promoting and maintaining relationships between children, their caregivers and peers, and core competency requirements in a school-age program.

Inclusion in Child Care is a distance learning course developed by OCCS that helps providers identify and understand children's specific disability issues and gives providers a guide for individualizing a child care program to meet a particular child's needs.

Montana

Montana's twelve Child Care Resource and Referral agencies provide early childhood practitioners with a variety of approved trainings and technical assistance. Practitioners are also given the opportunity to attend approved trainings offered by other agencies in their communities along with distance learning opportunities that have been developed by
Child Care Resource and Referral agencies, the Child Care Resource and Referral Network, Child Care Plus+, and ECC [early child care] college coursework available on the internet.

New York

Video Conference Training
Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) sponsors teleconferences, twice monthly, which bring recognized child care experts to child care providers at 96 sites across New York State. Providers may receive credit for their participation in the teleconferences towards their required 30 hours of training. An average of 4,000 providers participate in each session.

Washington

The Washington State Child Care Resource & Referral Network has several training, professional development and educational opportunities for child care providers. In addition to implementing the T.E.A.C.H. program, the Network offers the following:
- Building Blocks - Local child care resource and referral agencies (CCR&R's) partner with local family child care associations to offer this 20-hour, STARS-approved high-quality, relevant and practical training and mentoring to new or prospective family child care providers.
- DASA - The State Division of Drug and Alcohol Abuse has contracted with the CCR&R Network to design, create and disseminate a training curriculum to assist caregivers both in working with children of substance abusing parents, and in communicating effectively with the parents about the impact their addiction is having on their children.
- Learning Options - is the premier Internet campus for early childhood professionals and parents to expand and enhance professional development and educational opportunities.

ORGANIZATIONS

■ **Child Care Resources**
127 East Main, Suite 314
Missoula, MT 59802
406-728-6446 or 800-728-6446

World Wide Web: http://www.childcaretraining.org/

In 2001, Child Care Resources began developing online training units. Child Care Resources' online courses have been approved in 22 States—**Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Michigan, Minnesota, Montana, Nevada, New York, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Dakota, Texas, Utah, Washington,** and **Wyoming**—and are currently in the approval process for several other States. The online courses can be applied toward annual training to meet licensing requirements in other States that do not require pre-approval of training. Additional information is available on the Web at http://www.childcaretraining.org/approved.php?PHPSESSID=23a833abad946573fe7444cffb9a243a.

■ **HeadsUp! Reading**
National Head Start Association (NHSA)
1651 Prince Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
800-438-4888
World Wide Web: http://www.heads-up.org

HeadsUp! Reading is a distance-learning college course delivered via satellite television that is supported and expanded by information available on the Web. Training is delivered directly into child care programs and is taught by a diverse faculty of experts in early childhood and literacy, the course offers a variety of professional development credits, including Continuing Education Units (CEUs) and credit at more than 140 colleges nationwide.

This collaborative project, led by the National Head Start Association and its partners, the Council for Professional Recognition and RISE Learning Solutions, delivers professional development to early educators, parents, and child care providers at approximately 700 sites in 47 States nationwide. Additional information is available on the Web at http://www.huronline.org.

The National Child Care Information Center does not endorse any organization, publication, or resource.

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